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DE RUEHLB #0230/01 0571507
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4296
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3509
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 3712
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 000230

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ELA
ALSO FOR IO/PDAS WARLICK
P FOR DRUSSELL AND RRANGASWAMY
USUN FOR WOLFF/GERMAIN/SCHEDLBAUER
NSC FOR SHAPIRO, MCDERMOTT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/26/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [UNSC](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [LE](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: LEBANON: SLEIMAN PLEASED ABOUT CT COOPERATION,
RAVEN UAVS

BEIRUT 00000230 001.4 OF 002

////////// ZFR ZFR ZFR ZFR ZFR ZFR ZFR //////////
PLS ZFR ABOVE BEIRUT 230 IMI PLEASE ZFR ABOVE
BEIRUT 230 AND BLANK ASOCIATED MCS.
SORRY FOR INCONVENIENCE
///// ZFR ZFR ZFR /////

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commented. Sleiman also mentioned he will make a 24-hour trip to Oman on February 28. (Note: Oman has pledged \$4-5 million for Nahr al Barid Palestinian refugee camp reconstruction. End note.)

17. (C) Referring to the GOL statements denouncing the latest incident of Ketyousha rockets being launched from southern Lebanon into Israel on February 21, Ambassador noted that Sleiman's statement and those of PM Siniora and Speaker of the Parliament Nabih Berri had all underscored Lebanese support for UNSCR 1701. Speaking of Berri, Ambassador informed Sleiman that there was no truth to recent reports in some press outlets that the USG was working to keep Berri from being named Speaker again after the next parliamentary election or that the U.S. was behind Berri's bitter conflict with Siniora over the 2009 budget. She also noted that an article in the previous day's Al-Akhbar newspaper supposedly quoting former Assistant for National Security Affairs to former VP Cheney John Hannah was completely false. Sleiman commiserated, commenting on the poor quality of certain newspapers and media outlets.

COMMENT

18. (C) We would like to renew our request that we invite Sleiman to visit Washington in 2009, ideally before the Lebanese elections on June 7. Such a visit would underscore that USG support for Lebanon, and for the Lebanese presidency as a symbol of the institutions of state control, remains strong. A visit to the White House will also highlight that Lebanese moderates have a strong ally in the United States (and are well-placed to defend Lebanese Christian interests).
End Comment.

